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SUBJECT: PROPOSED STATEMENT REGARDING RVNAF PLANS (U)

REF: JCS 03092

CONCUR IN GENERAL WITH PROPOSED RELEASE. HOWEVER,
RECOMMEND CHANGES OUTLINED BELOW.

1. PARAGRAPHS ONE AND TWO BE CHANGED TO READ:

A. PARAGRAPH 1. PRESIDENT THIEU HAS ORDERED THE
FASTEST POSSIBLE MOBILIZATION OF 125,000 ADDITIONAL TROOPS
FOR SERVICE WITH THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM ARMED FORCES.
THESE ADDITIONAL TROOPS WILL INCREASE THE COMBAT STRENGTH
OF THE INFANTRY, AIRBORNE, ARTILLERY AND ARMORED CAVALRY
UNITS AND PROVIDE FOR ADDITIONAL TERRITORIAL FORCES FOR THE
SECURITY OF HAMLETS AND VILLAGES. THE PEOPLE OF SOUTH
VIETNAM NOW SUPPORT A MILITARY FORCE OF ABOUT 650,000 AND A
PARAMILITARY FORCE OF APPROXIMATELY 125,000 FOR A TOTAL
UNDER ARMS AT THE PRESENT TIME OF ABOUT 775,000.

B. PARAGRAPH 2. IN ORDER TO PROVIDE THE MANPOWER
FOR THIS RAPID BUILDUP FROM A POPULATION OF APPROXIMATELY
11,000,000 SOUTH VIETNAMESE UNDER GOVERNMENT PROTECTION,
THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM HAS STARTED DRAFTING 19 YEAR OLDS
AND PLANS TO INITIATE, IN MAY, THE DRAFTING OF 18 YEAR OLDS
FOR THE FIRST TIME. CURRENTLY ALL MEN UNDER ARMS IN THE
REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM ARMED FORCES HAVE HAD THEIR TOURS OF
SERVICE EXTENDED FOR AN INDEFINITE TIME. ALL PRGR SERVICE-
MEN, 33 YEARS OF AGE OR YOUNGER, THAT HAVE 5 YEARS OR LESS
ACTIVE DUTY HAVE BEEN RECALLED. IN FEBRUARY THERE WERE
7,423 VOLUNTEERS FOR MILITARY DUTY. THIS, WHEN COMPARED TO
THE MONTHLY AVERAGE OF 3,589 DURING 1967, REFLECTS AN
INCREASING SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND OBLIGATION BY THE
VIETNAMESE, AND A DEFINITE REPUDIATION OF THE COMMUNISTS.

DECLASSIFIED

E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.3

DA Memo, Jan. 5, 1988

By *ky* NARA Date 4-27-96

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C. RATIONALE:

(1) THE 800,000 CITED IN YOUR MSG HAS NOT BEEN MENTIONED BY THIEU OR IN ANY DOCUMENT EXCEPT HIGHLY CLASSIFIED PLANNING DOCUMENTS AND MESSAGES RELATING TO PROPOSED FY70 RVNAF FORCE STRUCTURE. BELIEVE WE SHOULD NOT UPSTAGE THIEU OR DIVULGE THIS PROPOSED LEVEL UNTIL IT IS APPROVED. THE PROPOSED REVISION ABOVE WILL REFLECT THE MAGNITUDE OF RVNAF MILITARY CONTRIBUTION IN A MORE COMPLETE LIGHT, SINCE THE PARAMILITARY FORCES ARE OFTEN OVERLOOKED, ALTHOUGH THEIR EFFORTS ARE IMPORTANT.

(2) THE GVN CURRENTLY PLANS TO START DRAFTING THE 18 YEAR OLD AGE GROUP IN MAY 1968. THIS COULD BE PUSHED BACK TO 15 APRIL ACCORDING TO THE DIRECTOR OF MOBILIZATION.

(3) EVEN THOUGH THE POPULATION IS 17,000,000 ONLY 67 PER CENT OR APPROXIMATELY 11,000,000 PEOPLE AS OF 31 JAN 68 ARE UNDER GOVERNMENT CONTROL. THIS IS MORE DESCRIPTIVE OF THE REAL IMPACT GVN MOBILIZATION HAS ON THE PEOPLE.

(4) THE GVN HAS NOT YET ANNOUNCED THE TERMS OF THE TOUR EXTENSION. WE, OF COURSE, PRESSED FOR A "DURATION OF THE WAR" CLAUSE BUT SINCE THIS RAN INTO CONSIDERABLE OPPOSITION IN THE GVN ASSEMBLY, SOME GVN OFFICIALS SEEM TO HAVE IN MIND A DEFINITE PERIOD (E.G., 5-6 YEARS). THIS HAS NOT BEEN RESOLVED AND IT WILL POSSIBLY BECOME ACADEMIC IN VIEW OF THIEU'S EMPHASIS ON A STEPPED UP MOBILIZATION; HOWEVER, WE SHOULD NOT PUT THIEU OR THE GVN ON THE SPOT BY PUBLICIZING AN UNRESOLVED POLICY. ALL SERVICEMEN WHEN DISCHARGED ARE CONSIDERED PART OF THE HOME RESERVE BUT THERE IS NO ORGANIZATION AS SUCH. ONLY THOSE "RESERVISTS" 33 YEARS OF AGE OR YOUNGER THAT HAVE SERVED FOR 5 YEARS OR LESS ARE BEING RECALLED AS OF NOW.

(5) DURING FEBRUARY 1968, THERE WERE 7,423 VOLUNTEERS FOR MILITARY DUTY COMPARED TO 1,077 IN FEB 67 AND A MONTHLY AVERAGE OF 3,589 DURING CY 1967. THIS IS SIGNIFICANT, SINCE IT REFLECTS AN INCREASING SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND OBLIGATION ON THE PART OF THE VIETNAMESE, PLUS THEIR REPUDIATION OF THE COMMUNISTS.

2. PARAGRAPH 3 CHANGES:

A. SO MUCH OF PARAGRAPH 3 THAT READS "ALL OF THE REGULAR FORCES ARE NOW BEING EQUIPPED WITH M16 RIFLE, ETC" BE CHANGED TO READ "ALL THE RVNAF COMBAT MANEUVER ELEMENTS ARE NOW BEING EQUIPPED, ETC."

B. RATIONALE. USE OF THE TERM "REGULAR FORCES" COULD BE INTERPRETED TO INCLUDE SUPPORT FORCES AND HEAD-QUARTERS ELEMENTS, WHICH ARE NOT IN FACT RECEIVING THE M16 RIFLE.

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